

182 h. 30

THE
G O S P E L - S H O P,
A
C O M E D Y
O F
F I V E A C T S ;

W I T H
A N E W P R O L O G U E A N D E P I L O G U E,
Originally intended for Public Representation,
But suppressed at the particular Desire of some eminent
D I V I N E S.

By R. H I L L, Esq; of CAMBRIDGE. K

*The Counterfeit, with spotless Sanctity, appears,
And mounts the Rostrum to regale your Ears
For Forty Minutes—with some disastrous News,
And smiles—to find his Lectures fill his Pews.
Beware!—these dire Illusions!—strange to tell,
A Gospel-Shop's the very Spawn of Hell!*

Published by FIELDING AND WALKER, No. 20, Paternoster-Row;
RICHARDSON AND URQUHART, under the Royal-Exchange;
SOUTHERN, St. James's-Street; BABB, No. 31, Oxford-Road;
LEACROFT, Charing-Cross; and sold by all Bookellers.

[PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.]



P R O L O G U E,

Intended to have been spoken,

With the A L T E R A T I O N S.

*T*HIS night we meant to treat our gen'rous friends
With modern dainties, which our author sends;
Drest neat and pure, without recourse to art,
Such living victims as deform the heart.——
Herein we fail'd—altho' no treason in't,
We now, with leave, present them you in print.
(That lofty doom, where once soft transport reign'd,
And beauteous females flock'd for—to be gain'd;
Whose ripen'd charms none cou'd withstand the touch,
They pleas'd insensibly—or they charm'd too much,)
Is now no more—since fair amusement's fled,
That seat of pleasure—now's—a Gospel Bed.——
Not for a brace of lovers to repose in!
No; for beauteous girls to shew their cloaths in.
There Jenny meets her foe—on Sunday night,
To learn to love—and play duets at sight.
A lot of random men, a project made,
And snatch'd religion's vitals to their aid;
They put on pious faces, piteous sighs,
To hide their base pursuits from godly eyes.
In gall'ry's high and lofty mount you rove;
For eighteen-pence you have a quarter's love.
Below the civil gemmen make you pay
A double price—for asking leave to pray.——
And while they court you with their flatt'ring strains,
They pocket hundreds—for their pious pains.
The preacher strains his nerves, to give you news,
But all his subjects tend to fill his pews.
What pity such exactions should be made,
To make religion each base worldling's trade!—
Far better he who steals the miser's pelf,
Than he who lures from poverty his wealth!
If you, kind friends, encourage us with hope,
We will anatomize——each Gospel Shop.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Dr. SCAPEGOAT, a rich covetous Methodist Preacher.

PARSON PROLIX, a Partner with Scapegoat.

ARTHUR LOVEFEAST, a furly insignificant Proprietor.

PETER CARELESS, a humane generous ditto.

Dr. TRIMMER, an Enemy to the Gospel-Shop.

MELMONT, his Friend.

TIMANTHES, a Professor.

SILVA, a Beau Attendant.

LEDGER, a Politician.

RACKET, a poor Parson.

ADAM PURBLIND, an Organist.

SIMON SYCOPHANT, a hypocritical Clerk.

MORDECAI, a Jew Old-Cloaths-Man.

RUSTIC, a Clownish Servant to Scapegoat.

W O M E N.

ORINDA, a Methodist Convert, in Love with Timanthes.

CLARISSA, a fine Singer.

OLD MARY, a deceitful Mendicant.

SCENE *A Vestry-Room.*

THE
GOSPEL-SHOP,
A COMEDY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

SCENE *a Study.*

Enter Dr. SCAPEGOAT and LOVEFEAST.

LOVEFEAST.

OUR guardian, Hope, has deceived us.—
We have expended beyond our calculations, and
disburs'd near two hundreds for our upper gallery.

SCAPEGOAT.

Incredible! but however our friends are nu-
merous, and ever ready to assist an undertaking
pursued for the benefit of Christian professors.

B

LOVE-

LOVEFEAST.

And our declining purses (*aside*) but fear is a busy guest, and will imperceptibly steal in the mind, to work up despair and alarm us.—You have a comfortable independency, Doctor, and wou'd not feel the loss in pocket, should our endeavours fail—but I am sorely troubled with an old complaint—poverty!—it unhinges my mind and stings my soul. I wish heartily our supporters were assembled under the protection of a good Whitefieldite, that some relief might be procured from the plate.

SCAPEGOAT.

Unconscious hopes do but illude the mind with false rays of success; but to doubt that power and influence subservient to our will—is barely reason. A pleasing preacher will allure his audience to acts of generosity and kindness, and by a little tincture of flattery thrown o'er the arts of persuasion, may command the most embitter'd enemy's support—but let no sighs find entrance in your breast—let all be calm and peaceful—we'll soon dispel your fears with the benefit of a prosperous harvest.

LOVEFEAST.

Hope languishes and grows faint.—To fear the worst is only preparing to enjoy success—each scene with gen'rous ardor seems to glow—as if our friends, elate with goodness, would protect us through all the mazes of disappointment.—But,—

SCAPEGOAT.

Why of that whirlwind spirit, which scatters doubts to empty air—and is unfit for reason?

LOVE-

The GOSPEL-SHOP. 11

LOVEFEAST.

The picture of despair hangs e'er before me—
and on each review some fatal omen presents it-
self, as if determined to distress me.—The good
need not of aid; but the profuse and weak re-
quire support.—That fam'd temple, where once I
rested all my hopes of future supplies, is chang'd,
the foundation undermin'd, and all a mere delu-
sive dream!

SCAPEGOAT.

Why share in woe that might be avoided—
patience is a powerful ingredient to happiness.—
If you disregard our assistance—to join the enemy
of human mildness—despair! — Distress awaits
you with justice.

LOVEFEAST.

And that is no rarity.—My mind like opening
leaves unfolds its grief—and where's the man
who ventures all his substance in the pursuit of
one undertaking, but feels the dire effects of sad
despair.—

SCAPEGOAT.

If 'tis ventur'd on a noble purpose—Heaven
ensures protection and success.

LOVEFEAST.

No doubt—but with the proviso our chapel
should suffer from Dr. Trimmer, you'll not re-
linquish your connexions—as you possess no living.

SCAPEGOAT.

Very just—yet shou'd we fall victims in our enemy's hands, you may rely on my steady perseverance in the original agreement.

LOVEFEAST.

Then adieu despair——and now I invoke the precious powers of peace——Thou fair goddess of kindness and forgiveness associate with me, to remove all prejudice, and bring redoubled transport to my breast.——I wish, Doctor, I had your fortune, I should not be covetous of more.

SCAPEGOAT.

I wish you'd confirm it—but 'tis a natural disposition to secure each grain of value. Other professions have the peculiar privilege of trading in variety of articles—but the game of Religion is hazardous, unless play'd by skilful hands.

LOVEFEAST.

If solid virtue and sound sense were the substance of every preacher's doctrine, it wou'd ensure success, and be found profitable; but alas, Doctor, nothing now is heard from the pulpit but dull repetitions — idle tales — wand'ring thoughts — and a few remarks to patch up the sermon:——in some hands it appears a drug, or nauseous medicine, which, unless season'd o'er with the sweets of a handsome countenance, will not operate,—in particular with the ladies.

SCAPE-

SCAPEGOAT?

'Tis a misfortune the gay world are subject to, who condemn and censure a species of worthy men, which they stigmatise Methodists, but it wou'd be worthy their attention to collect the same materials for their composition, as constitutes a true Methodist.

LOVEFEAST.

Some, Doctor, I allow in that sect are good ;— but many wear illiterate caputs, deprived of every ingredient that entitles man to respect :— despair and ignorance lurk in their mind :— they traffick in idleness, and wander from generosity to generosity, till they tire their worthy contributors.

SCAPEGOAT.

These are the gentry who have receiv'd no university education ;— a set of forlorn wretches, unskill'd in every subject—dealers in falsehood and imposition—servile slaves to flattery and meanness—who wound the reputation of every worthy minister, by their sophistical tales of invention ;— they supplicate charity, and rail against their former protectors, whose circumstances will not admit of further relief.

LOVEFEAST.

True hell-hounds, faith !—I think, Doctor, they wou'd make, if collected in one body, a tolerable regiment for His Majesty.

SCAPE-

SCAPE GOAT.

A regiment of shallow caputs — a pea dis-
charg'd from a child's pop-gun wou'd pierce
through them without any obstruction: — they
have nothing within but deceit. —

LOVEFEAST.

And a desire to prosper in every attempt. —
But I must bid you good morning, Doctor, as I
am commission'd to make a town chariot for our
justice, in the execution of which I may gather
some intelligence from Doctor Trimmer.

SCAPE GOAT.

Very possible. — You'll return in the evening,
this being collection night, you'll be wanting to
hold the plate. —

LOVEFEAST.

To do that business, Doctor, I seldom fail.

[Exit Lovefeast.]

SCAPE GOAT *solus.*

There is a prevailing fashion in religion as well
as dress--propriety becomes both—but how to avoid
the extreme is a difficult attainment, some carry
affectation — some imposition — but the actions
are most noted, the collegians are ingenious youths--
nature seems to have instilled an exalted genius
in their minds, whereby they become shining or-
naments in the pulpit — but here comes Careless
with a merry aspect as usual.

Enter

Enter CARELESS.

Good morning, Doctor, what news from Love-feast?

SCAPEGOAT.

His brain's too much confused to hear intelligence, or relate it—he seems distracted with despair—and fears the Gazette will stamp a final period on all his hopes.

CARELESS.

Amazement! a popular tradesman and dejected at the loan of Two Hundreds.

SCAPEGOAT.

If a failure should defeat our intentions, it may surprise and deject us all.

CARELESS.

I think, Doctor, you forsake your honest principles—formerly men engaged in any laudable undertaking, had a shield for their defence,—they relied on the patronage of those they were serving for support, and despised the flimsy garment of despair—as unworthy a minister's thought.

SCAPEGOAT.

It behoves all men to protect their property.

CARELESS.

Not to idolize it in the arms of religion—that passion for wealth, which lurks in your breast, should be

be extended to some general good—happy is the man who lends that succour and support to the afflicted, which his affluence demands—Heav'n records such acts of hospitality, but mourns so few promote them.—The veil of disguise protects imposition from appearing, and the mask of religion is too often artfully hung o'er an evil mind.

SCAPEGOAT.

However necessary disguise may be for a professing Hypocrite, it is much more needful for a Minister, who orders his principles of conversation to suit the complexion of various men.

CARELESS.

I pity,—nay despise those civil gentry who can stifle their conscience, merely to give a flavor to their conversation—prudence and discretion should teach you to preserve a medium to all which commands respect.—But here I see is Lovefeast coming, with an index of reports, I suppose.

SCAPEGOAT.

His mind is like a news-paper, open to all inspectors.

Enter LOVEFEAST.

LOVEFEAST.

What friend Careless here—any news to cheer a drooping sun-flower, that hangs its withering head, fading for some cordial support.

CARELESS.

Rather court the heav'n's for protection, or bid the cheerful light of morn unlock the dungeon of thy mind, and yield thee comfort.

LOVE-

LOVEFEAST.

Thou art more noble than a friend, and breathes the pure spirit of consolation, which remedies all my cares.

CARELESS!

If thou wert bound in poverty's low cell, where no content or sportive ray could raise your down-cast eye, I should pity thee, but still alive! and happy in the peaceful lap of plenty, yet waste in ceaseless accents those precious hours kind Heaven bestowed for joy, in feeble nipping murmurs, like pensive gravity pining for loss of vigour. Beware—such wanton acts of discontent may terminate in death.—Thank Providence for all the blessings sent, nor pine at fate—too well thou know'st, that many a princely mind would soar above thy vulgar principle; did they enjoy thy wealth, so small a portion wou'd accelerate the hearts of thousands—refrain thou self-tormentor, nor let desponding thoughts break on thy mind, and disturb thy anxious breast.

LOVEFEAST.

There is that sweetness and sound reasoning in his argument, which at once unmans me, and yet distresses my very soul.—Doctor, he is a valuable pattern for us to follow.

SCAPEGOAT.

Excuse the necessity of bridling me in your net—my maxims of conduct always merit esteem without a guide.

C

LOVE-

LOVEFEAST.

Being so well connected with you Doctor, they procure you friends, but the misfortune is, petitions meet with no success.—Always from home, or busy! busy!

SCAPEGOAT.

My time, engaged with study, will not admit of every fawning guest, supplicating relief, more weighty subjects occupy my attention, these swarming caterpillars are continually hovering about me.

LOVEFEAST.

Relieve them, Doctor, the only method to get rid of them.

CARELESS.

If ambition is prudent, 'tis when we emulate each others worthy examples—prosperity requires generosity—how hateful is the miser's wealth, which rusts in idleness!—could we but view how Angels frown on miserly minds, we should sacrifice the last shilling to some charitable purpose.

LOVEFEAST.

Eloquence beyond my attainment.

SCAPEGOAT.

Confined principles need of enlargement, to raise a spark of generous friendship in the mind—but wealth is generally attended with this misfortune, a narrow limited beneficence.

CARE-

C A R E L E S S.

Reflection alone would constrain you to acts of noble generosity—avoid that superficial art, nor expect content from riches—that happiness is confined within the narrow limits of idolatry, whose pleasure is centred in the review of his wealth—covet not, nor envy—distribute freely, and reward liberally—a humane mind would rather sink in the cold chambers of death—pitiless and unknown—an honest man—than live amidst pomp and grandeur, with only an affected title to it—to be in possession of its virtues, is a treasure and an estate—but to die without its substance—is, a double death.

S C A P E G O A T,

How he tortures my affections——(*aside.*)

C A R E L E S S.

Many, I fear, who are marked as distinguished characters, are so elate with a false conception, they lose the pleasures resulting from an honest principle.

S C A P E G O A T,

We all seem strangely metamorphosed into dull moralists—our present meeting will not admit of any harangue or debate—I wish, Gentlemen, you would retire to some more convenient place.

C A R E L E S S.

Doctor, we are ready to attend you—do but command, and we obey.

Exeunt omnes.

S C E N E II.

SCENE a Hall.

Enter LEDGER and RACKET.

LEDGER.

Well, Racket!—I find your profession succeeds to your wishes.

RACKET.

My wishes then must humble—to be contented with the small produce of my employ—I have only earned four-pence to-day, and preached twenty minutes for it.

LEDGER.

Well paid man—you bought the old sermon at a stall for a penny, and have cleared three-pence by the first perusal—good profit, Racket—good profit.

RACKET.

I think I'll turn politician!

LEDGER.

Ah! a bad trade, Racket—but you have no materials for that business—it don't flourish now—all the world are engaged in politics—we dream of politics,

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politics, feast on politics, run mad with politics, and to tell you a secret, Racket,—politics will ruin the nation.

R A C K E T.

Faith then, I'll have no concern with them.—

L E D G E R.

A wise resolve——we have lost all policy in politics—justice and credit have eloped from our land—and impending ruin seems to besiege the world.

R A C K E T.

And the inhabitants thereof are all in a lethargy—careless and insensible—provoked by no danger, though inevitable ruin hangs before them.

L E D G E R.

Petitions, &c. as soon as presented are forgot—they serve only for thread-papers to the royal infants—eloquence resounds in the house—but to no effect—nothing but invasions and insurrections—trade flew to the Devil—sad scenes of human misery appear—triumphant rage, revenge and death seem plaistered on every wall, like quack bills—O ye Gods! bid the bloody contest cease—or meet the stern abettor, and quell his fury.

R A C K E T.

If these are the materials of a politician, I must make some application to study—such rhetoric we seldom

seldom use in our Pulpits — but I beg not to interrupt your entertaining remarks — if tears or prayers could avail, I would readily assist, but fear—

L E D G E R .

Indeed thou hast cause to fear the mournful tidings of your country's fate—the horrid shouts of barbarous triumph — of thousands slain — yet each woe unpitied, and each pang unfelt — ah! see — ruin hangs on the arm of victory — and death pursuing close behind. —

R A C K E T .

These are silent tortures — Heav'n suspend the war and rekindle unity and peace. But to our former debate, you can assist me in my new profession, should I turn politician.

L E D G E R .

Not to affect my own pocket, paragraphs now don't fetch half their price, they have fell like the stocks, twelve and a half per cent. which is sixpence for each ten-lin'd verse, and half a dozen lies must be invented to compleat it.

R A C K E T .

Well, faith, I'm a good hand at composing lies, and do think I should be a valuable acquisition to the politicians in general, as I could furnish them with fictitious reports occasionally.

L E D G E R .

What! to deceive your country, by fabricating falsehoods, only to drain the bitter cup of woe, to poison reason, and illude the world! —

R A C K E T .

RACKET.

But money is pressing and urgent—I owe four and six-pence to Razor for powder and shaving these six months, and must see to pacify the fellow, perhaps on my turning politician he may give me longer credit. —Mankind judge from appearances.

LEDGER.

With this proviso, you get your money—
Government requires long credit.

RACKET.

The profession is so genteel, I shall have barbers, taylors and poulterers court me for my custom, and you're always us'd well when in debt,

LEDGER.

Ah! how so?

RACKET.

Whene'er you're met by a creditor, he pulls off his hat,—hopes you're well, — shall be glad to serve you; — has some choice articles fresh imported, &c. only to invite you to discharge his account—pay him his bill, and he'll let you pass unnoticed.

LEDGER.

Well done, Racket, a good thought, I'll profit by your remark, and be assur'd I'll lend you every aid in my power.

RACKET.

RACKET.

My dear Ledger, I thank you, and hope I shall have the pleasure of your company at all the coffee-houses.

LEDGER.

Every day, Racket, I shall give you some business to execute.

Exeunt omnes.

SCENE

SCENE III.

SCENE *a Study.*

Enter Doctor SCAPEGOAT, LOVEFEAST,
and CARELESS.

SCAPEGOAT.

Our last week's bills amounted to Forty-one Pounds — and in order to ascertain the whole value of expences, — I summoned every workman, — and from a fair calculation, they will amount to Eight Hundred and fifty Pounds. —

LOVEFEAST,

Impossible!

CARELESS.

A trifle, considering the prospect and interest,

SCAPEGOAT,

To learn the sequel of this business, I have stated a fair Debtor and Creditor, allowed for all demands relative to the repairs, for candles, officers, and attendants; which calculation will amount to, with the interest issuing from the principal, One hundred and eighty Pounds annually, including rent, &c.---on the receiving side, from tickets, burials, christenings, and plate collections, about Eleven hundred Pounds, which will on an average be about Two hundreds a year for each proprietor.

D

LOVE-

LOVEFEAST.

A glorious Sermon this——(*aside*)——yet I'm so dubious of its success, I wou'd chearfully sell my share for Three Hundreds, ready down.

SCAPEGOAT.

A trifling consideration!--but suppose religion foreign to your connexions and disposition, so you wish to rid yourself of its concern at all events,

LOVEFEAST.

No matter the disposition or profession, wou'd it advance an Hundred occasionally.

CARELESS.

A baneful slave to a covetous will, still unacquainted with those solid joys pure contentment gives; but ever busy to increase in worldly wealth, as if an inhabitant of the earth for ever.

LOVEFEAST.

But what if the Doctor shou'd pursue against us with violence, the law runs in his favor, he may overturn our hopes.

SCAPEGOAT.

The illiberal attacks of Dr. Trimmer will not effect us---we have the majority of his parishioners on our behalf---he has the Bishop.

LOVE-

LOVEFEAST:

And many staunch friends.

SCAPEGOAT.

But more bitter enemies---the Doctor wishes to retract---our offers were liberal and sincere, tho' he refus'd them.

LOVEFEAST.

Well, I'll wait the issue, nor censure nor despair, till I know the event.

CARELESS.

A happy resolve; I congratulate you on the recovery of your senses.

SCAPEGOAT.

Some important business makes it needful for your attendance here on Saturday next.

CARELESS and LOVEFEAST.

We'll not fail to attend you, Doctor.

SCAPEGOAT.

In the intrim of which I hope to be the bearer of some agreeable news.

LOVEFEAST.

I wish you success, Doctor. —

CARE-

CARELESS.

At what hour, Doctor, shall we attend you?

SCAPEGOAT.

About Four.

LOVEFEAST.

Tea time — tea time — for conversation and dispute. —

SCAPEGOAT.

You'll walk up stairs, Gentlemen, and drink a glass of good raisin. —

LOVEFEAST.

Have you no madeira or frontiniac. —

CARELESS.

No, no. A glass of good raisin is preferable.

SCAPEGOAT.

The business of a preacher is too delicate to be disturbed with strong liquors. —

LOVEFEAST.

Or the hand too reserved to pay for it. — (*aside*)

SCAPEGOAT.

I have some curious raspberry, or currant, if more acceptable.

CARE-

The GOSPEL-SHOP.

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CARELESS.

The raisin will answer our purpose very well,
Doctor.

LOVEFEAST.

Aye! Aye! reason is a predominant spirit,

LOVEFEAST and CARELESS.

We'll follow you, Doctor, and accept your ge-
nerous offer.—

Exeunt omnes.

End of Act the First.

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE I.

SCENE *a Chapel with Workmen employed.*

Enter Doctor TRIMMER and MELMONT as Spectators.

TRIMMER.

A beautiful aspect this chapel bears.—

MELMONT.

'Tis a novelty to see galleries one above another, like the theatre, particularly in a religious house.—

TRIMMER.

Yet no wonder, as the proprietors will reap a double benefit by it.

MELMONT.

It seems calculated more for amusement than serious devotion — youth and girls may accompany each other here for an hour's diversion as before.—

TRIMMER.

The worthy pastors would not interfere with that, so the guests had purchased their tickets—

MEL-

MELMONT.

From the various reports respecting the managers, I cannot think them worthy of countenance.—

TRIMMER.

Nor any sensible person — but how many poor infatuated people will sacrifice every enjoyment, to follow a fawning methodist preacher.—

MELMONT.

'Tis true—but interest here seems to direct the business—and men of no principles creep under the sanctity of religion, to make dupes of their followers.

TRIMMER.

Men of no honor are here protected by the black gown—they court the ministers for their interest.—

MELMONT.

I see no difference between a divine who curbs his holy principles to feed his purse, than the lawyer who oppresses the innocent and brings ruin on the wretched.

TRIMMER.

The illiberal rant of a methodist is now preferred to the wisdom of the ablest divine.—

MELMONT.

And what poison so destructive to the human mind as the mad enthusiastic rant of a mercenary parson.

TRIM-

TRIMMER.

They are like the unskilful physician who prescribes at random his medicines for the sake of returning money.

MELMONT.

So copious as this building appears, it would have been an act of charity and benevolence to have allotted a part for poor persons gratis — but the eye of interest seems to have watched very minutely and turned each crevice to advantage.

TRIMMER.

That is far from a christian spirit. —

MELMONT.

Such men are less worthy of merit than a tyrant, who depopulates whole nations, and sacrifices the lives of millions to his insatiable desire of conquest; or the author, who to ensure the sale of his works, throws slander at the good, and taints the virtuous mind, with tales of wantonness and indelicacy. —

TRIMMER.

'Twould be worth your curiosity to attend here of an evening, to hear a yawning clerk, half asleep chaunt two or three dull staves, without meaning or melody; and an organist, who plays with one finger.

MEL-

MELMONT.

These are two capital productions then.

TRIMMER.

Yes, capital blockheads, who only serve to confirm the town's suspicions of their employers. The one has neither voice or judgment; the other no fingers or ears. —

MELMONT.

Well, Doctor, if convenient, I'll give it an hour's attendance some evening. —

Exeunt Omnes.

E

SCENE

SCENE II.

SCENE *a Study.*

Enter Doctor SCAPEGOAT and SIMON
SYCOPHANT.

SCAPEGOAT,

Well, Simon!

SIMON.

Dear Doctor, I hope you're well.

SCAPEGOAT,

Yes, thank you, Simon.

SIMON.

Did you read, Doctor, the scandalous paragraph
which appeared in yesterday's advertizer.

SCAPEGOAT.

No, Simon, what was it?

SIMON.

Oh! Doctor, full of bitter invectives against your
Doctorship and me.

SCAPEGOAT.

Don't let it distress you, Simon.

SIMON.

S I M O N.

It accuses me of receiving money, and distributing it amongst my poor relations, which you know, Doctor, is very false—I am afraid they will attack me again—He must be some human devil, to dart his poisonous arrows at an innocent man—I will find his bashful Worship if I can—God willing.

S C A P E G O A T.

Be silent, Simon, on the subject, newspaper malice lives but a day, and is gone.

S I M O N.

I thank you, Doctor, for your kindness, past, present, and to come.

S C A P E G O A T.

Let me see you, Simon, to-morrow early, as I expect Parson Prolix here in a few minutes.

S I M O N.

I'll be ready, Doctor—God willing.

Exit Simon.

Enter a M E S S E N G E R.

M E S S E N G E R.

Parson Prolix would wish you a few minutes conversation with you.

S C A P E G O A T.

I'll attend him instantly.

Exit Scapegoat.

E 2

SCENE

SCENE III.

SCENE *a Parlour.*

Enter Doctor SCAPEGOAT and Parson
PROLIX.

PROLIX.

I'm happy to see you well, Doctor—

SCAPEGOAT.

I thank you kindly.—

PROLIX.

I met Simon returning -- any news?

SCAPEGOAT.

You know Simon breeds complaints, or picks them out of every error.

PROLIX.

Poor man, he interferes in all disputes, and never reaps much benefit.

SCAPEGOAT.

I have had Lovefeast and Careless here to-day, and much arguing on both sides, Lovefeast is extremely doubtful of the chapel's succeeding to our wishes — and imagines the popular appearance on our first opening was only a medley of curious and idle

idle people, who will not shew their faces here again—offered to sell his share for three hundreds, its very obstinate and perverse—whilst Careless is a worthy partner, acts nobly, and preserves a conduct worthy of a prince.

PROLIX.

He always had good principles instilled in him, and was naturally of a serious turn of mind, though occasionally the attracting snares of beauty will lead his mind from sober reflection—but any news from Doctor Trimmer?—

SCAPEGOAT.

He has summoned a vestry, but their resolution is not to assist him in his prosecution, he has refused our additional offer—yet I am fearful he will pursue his intentions jointly with his intimate friends.

PROLIX.

Then we are still in the same predicament—however I am sensible to concur in his exorbitant demands, would be a token of stupidity, or something worse.

SCAPEGOAT.

It would rob us of the profitable income our labors deserve and our merits expect—to allow him his demand, would be on an average two hundred a year, which would reduce our annual stipend to less than one hundred and fifty.

PROLIX.

PROLIX.

A small pittance !

SCAPEGOAT.

Yes, and we are likely to fare worse, on account of Lovefeast's mad actions — hypocrisy may lurk under the veil for a time, but soon looses its false glare, and discovers the snake — disguise is but a threadbare garment, a curious eye may see its defects and discern the original — our friends and supporters begin to smell his wonted tricks of illusion, which he seasoned over with a false appearance, but he may cease to doubt of its success, when he can look into his confused catalogue of crimes.

PROLIX.

I am unacquainted with his particular failings, but believe they are no farther censurable, than he kisses the girls, ogles them at chapel, conducts them home, drinks their healths, sings them ludicrous songs, &c.—these I believe are the most noted.

SCAPEGOAT.

And they denote such an unstable mind, our benefactors will not admire him.

PROLIX.

If such acts of impropriety in one man should disgrace and injure the reputation of any society,
he

he ought to be excluded — I suppose, Doctor, from the variety of beauteous females who attend here, you find yourself embarrassed which to choose,

SCAPEGOAT.

That danger is avoided.

PROLIX.

Not yet married, I presume.

SCAPEGOAT.

No, preparing only.

PROLIX.

Then we may conclude the lady has consented — but who can withstand so pleasing and powerful a countenance — I have heard many girls say, Doctor, you look well in your nightcap.

SCAPEGOAT.

You seem disposed for ridicule. —

PROLIX.

No, Doctor, that is an amusement beneath my notice — but I must confess many of our young female attendants pay their regular visits at the the chapel, more to gaze on you than to edify. — But has your lady any beauty, Doctor?

SCAPE-

SCAPEGOAT.

She has,

PROLIX.

Of some property and connexion, I make no doubt.

SCAPEGOAT.

Money is a great preservative, it prevents abject poverty preying on the mind, and keeps the world from frowning on your actions; though beneath contempt, it carries the genuine art of persuasion, unlocks the prison door, produces love; in short, it abounds with charms.

PROLIX.

A pretty definition of money---but, Doctor, its charms are perplexing, a sufficiency pleadeth need of more—it cannot relieve affliction nor purchase content, few of its acts merit applause—health is not nourished with it—its vices are innumerable—and the eager prosperity some have to enjoy it in abundance, alas! too often stamps a fatal period to their lives.

SCAPEGOAT.

To be deprived of its influence is worse than death——wealth abounds with smiles, it attracts friendship, procures interest, and gives its possessor a noble grandeur and superiority, whereby he commands uncontroul'd—look then at abject poverty,

erty, after the smiles of fortune are vanish'd, and keen distress with hateful aspect approaches—the world frowns—friendship retires—and you may live and die unnotic'd and unregretted.

P R O L I X.

Yet with all the advantages of this inglorious superiority wealth maintains in pompous meanness and glaring lustre, I would prefer a life of servile slavery, with virtue's true nobility—can riches pay the debt of nature, or stop the time of death, secure you a peaceful habitation, or give you ease while nature draws its last, its painful pang.—Remember the truly good are still the generous and sincere.

S C A P E G O A T.

Money and beauty are both attracting objects.

P R O L I X.

Then you have sacrificed the one for the other, I presume.

S C A P E G O A T.

Chance favour'd me with the sight of an agreeable female, of whose perfections I soon became enamoured—fortunately she had a few thousands, which rather increased my affections—I courted, and soon prevailed.

P R O L I X.

A perfect master of that happy art—but mark the lurking impetuosity of an ambitious mind—a few thousands animated your desires, which we
F suppose,

suppose, if it were only a few hundreds would have check'd your intentions, and conveyed your affections to a more wealthy object——such base treachery and ingratitude is unpardonable.

SCAPEGOAT.

Those are vain suggestions——private interest would sink at the approach of beauty and innocence.

PROLIX.

'Tis a fatal omen, when policy assumes a religious name, only to disguise hypocrisy and license deceit.

SCAPEGOAT.

I shall, with the utmost expedition, see to celebrate our nuptials, immediately after which I purpose retiring into the country a few days, when I must request you to officiate for me, during my absence.

PROLIX.

At the accustom'd price, I suppose.—

SCAPEGOAT.

Nay, friends shou'd not demand pay for each others assistance.

PROLIX.

But remember, Doctor, you charged me eighteen-pence for coach-hire last sermon.

SCAPE-

SCAPEGOAT.

Well, I agree to pay the accustomed price —

PROLIX.

With additional pay, I will give them extraordinary discourses.

SCAPEGOAT.

No, no, the usual price, the usual price.

PROLIX.

Three-quarters then is long enough. —

SCAPEGOAT.

Plenty ! plenty !

PROLIX.

I wish you, Doctor, a safe and pleasant journey, and your lady all the success she can expect. — that's a very little, I am afraid. — (*Aside*)

SCAPEGOAT.

Farewel, Prolix—you'll remember double duty.

PROLIX.

Aye! aye! and single pay—(*aside*) I am somewhat similar to you, Doctor, in that particular, never forget that duty which is succeeded with pay—it was a good piece of policy in me to demand it — other-ways, I might have forgot the duty I had to perform —

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form—but money, you know, Doctor, abounds with charms—and often serves for a memento—so will coach-hire cure me of asking favors — once more, Doctor, adieu!

S C A P E G O A T .

Prolix, I wish you well.

(Exit Prolix)

S C A P E G O A T . *solus.*

'Tis a hard defence to quiet his attacks——can malice charge me with one thought or deed I ought to blush at—I have lived to gain respect, and wherefore suffer from the torturing tongue of envy, none can resist beauty, and if strengthened with interest, will subdue the proudest resistance—wherefore then the blame of contracting an union with so powerful an advocate.—But here comes Simon again, full of troubles no doubt.

Enter S I M O N .

S C A P E G O A T .

Well, Simon, any new occurrence.—

S I M O N .

Continually some brainless caput is at work, to rob me of my eminence.

S C A P E G O A T .

What fresh arrivals are there?—

S I M O N .

S I M O N.

A very litigious, spiteful paragraph hath been inserted—I have pocketed the paragraph, to read to you (God willing.)

Reads the Paragraph to the following effect :

A C A R D.

A constant attendant (and he should have said a busy one) at —— Chapel, requests Simon Sycophant, the clerk, not to disturb the congregation with the continual waving of his hand, as if beating time was necessary in reading the litany—and further requests him to keep his head from nodding like an Indian image, which greatly disturbs the company before him—if he imagines the people will look upon it as a sudden expression of joy, from the scriptures, he is deceived—as in general it has the contrary effect, and renders him an object of public ridicule and contempt.

Old-Lloyd's.

S C A P E G O A T.

Nothing but a strain of malice, Simon, not worth your notice—while innocence prevails, you have no cause to fear.

S I M O N.

I could wish their tongues hung up at a butcher's-shop.

SCAPE-

SCAPEGOAT.

The capital office you hold in this chapel is the cause of your numerous enemies. — But here is a stranger coming—sit down, Simon.

Enter TIMANTHES.

TIMANTHES.

I beg your excuse, Doctor, for this abrupt intrusion.

SCAPEGOAT.

Pray be seated, Sir.—

TIMANTHES.

My business being at the request of several subscribers to your chapel, I have presumed this introduction, to inform you of a few particulars.

SCAPEGOAT.

Nothing fatal, I hope, Sir.—

TIMANTHES.

No, no, the substance of my errand is briefly this—a certain official character near your department, whose slanderous tongue accuses even innocence of calumny, has of late acted the part of Judas, a babler and deceiver, creeps by artful persuasion, and a disguised character, into the inmost recesses of the mind, under the specious pretence of

of being of some singular advantage.—when finding his schemes prove fruitless, he, with all the venom and rancour of an enraged fury, wounds that heart whose peaceful transport had e'er been its peculiar privilege.

SCAPEGOAT.

Who can this concealed barbarian mean?

TIMANTHES.

One of hateful memory—an insulting infidel—how vile the task, to make another's woes his dear employ—he found his way to esteem, by a veil of sanctity, imposed on the innocent by repeated threats, till tired of his disastrous tales they forced the monster hence—now his coward heart, to forward his innocence, darts arrows of the most poisonous nature, to give fresh torture to the reeking wound.——Hell disdains such acts of inhumanity, when protected and fed with the dainties of a splendid table, as a friendly guest, all was serene and peaceful—but his frequent visits and fawning actions carried such evident marks of flattery they forbid his company, and now are suffering under his vile aspersions.

SCAPEGOAT.

'Tis almost incredible, yet so like the world, even suspicion confirms it.——And who may this man be?

TIMANTHES.

A near servant of the pulpit.—

SIMON.

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S I M O N.

I hope, Sir, you hint not at me.

T I M A N T H E S.

At no other, I assure you.

S I M O N.

Oh! heavens, how can I bear this scurrility?

S C A P E G O A T.

You amaze me

S I M O N.

Madness darts from my eyes—to sit so tamely, and hear my character blasted deliberately—assist me ye pitying gods! that I may revenge the base assertion and justify my innocence.

S C A P E G O A T.

Be patient.

S I M O N.

Gracious heaven! to what am I reserved?

T I M A N T H E S.

A mind susceptible of innate feelings would scorn a victory of such base ingratitude, and innocence would defend a false accusation candidly—but a coward murders himself with his own rage—Vindicate your innocence by your future conduct.

S I M O N.

S I M O N.

Oh! my cruel fate, not one solitary blessing left to condole with me, a slave tossed to and fro, without pity or regret—Oh! what am I doom'd to suffer.—

S C A P E G O A T.

Innocence may be suspected, but will always defend itself.

T I M A N T H E S.

Doctor, I am your humble servant, and hope time will either confirm or refute these assertions.

S C A P E G O A T.

Sir, I thank you for your kindness.—

Exit Timanthes.

S I M O N.

Dear Doctor, what can this false rais'd calumny mean—I cannot deserve it—I have acted more the character of a saint than if I had really been one, my disguise was too ingeniously manag'd to be easily discern'd—I was always subservient to the meanest will, and why I'm thus abus'd I cannot tell—I am addicted to no vice—familiar with no wanton—a friend to poverty—I may have assum'd a character ill suited to my complexion—it may hang awkwardly on me—and so the people pronounce me an hypocrite.—

G

S C A P E -

SCAPEGOAT.

A variety of conjectures crowd on my mind—I cannot yet countenance any. I would wish to believe it all the effect of a malicious mind.

SIMON.

Dear Doctor, it can be nothing else, the mere phrensy of a mad brain.

SCAPEGOAT.

Make yourself easy, Simon, I shall revere you the same, till this report be confirmed.

SIMON.

I hope, Doctor, you'll be convinced of my innocence.—I will see you again to-morrow (God willing.)

Exeunt omnes.

End of the Second Act.

ACT

A C T III.

SCENE I.

SCENE *a Hall.*

Enter RUSTIC and MORDECAI.

RUSTIC.

Friend Mordecai, I have some articles in your way to dispose of.

MORDECAI.

What do they consist of, Rustic.

RUSTIC.

There be two linings of the Doctor's old grey lasting, an old hat, wore rusty, and a pocket bible which hath lost its brains in the pulpit.—

MORDECAI.

Have you no valuable articles, no second-hand cloaths of the Doctor's?

RUSTIC.

No, faith, he loves his old companions too well to desert them, his old black coat has liv'd with him, in constant use, these twelve years, and has been but twice turned, his shoes are made of everlasting stuff, for they never wears out.

G 2

MOR-

The GOSPEL-SHOP.

MORDECAI.

A poor place, faith, Rustic, without perquisites—these Doctors live on religion, and so save money, but your mistress.——

RUSTIC.

Aye, well thought of, here is a new pair of fashionable stays, which my good mistress has left off, she swells monstrously every day, and so wears jumps, Mordecai.

MORDECAI.

Fifteen shillings for the whole.—

RUSTIC.

Fifteen! our Molly would snap at them for a guinea—why they cost two guineas but a month ago making.

MORDECAI.

Fifteen is a good price to save being a thief.

RUSTIC.

Oh! my mistress has six months to go—I shall be in Jamaica before that time; besides the Doctor won't mind a pair of stays for a fine child.

MORDECAI.

Well, Rustic, here's fifteen, and if they are called for, say Mordecai had them to enlarge.

RUSTIC.

R U S T I C.

Aye, so I will—well give us the money.

M O R D E C A I.

Here.—Have you no plate?

R U S T I C.

O-yes, enough that we never use.

M O R D E C A I.

I have some new coined beauties ready that will tempt you.—

R U S T I C.

Well, come to-morrow, at seven, but don't forget your new coined beauties.

M O R D E C A I.

No, no.

Exit Mordecai.

R U S T I C.

If my measter was generous, I should be honest—but here he comes.

Enter SCAPEGOAT.

S C A P E G O A T.

Who have you had here, Rustic?

R U S T I C.

R U S T I C.

An old friend, Doctor, he is to bring me some new coined beauties to-morrow.

S C A P E G O A T.

I think he had the appearance of a jew; if so, beware of his deception—they are born corrupted—nursed in the arms of deceit—educated in the school of infamy, and experienced in all vicious and impious actions.

R U S T I C.

He may be a jew; but if he brings his new coined beauties, I shall swear he is a Christian.

S C A P E G O A T.

The world on imposition lives, and he who derives most knowledge in the school of treachery is by the world counted the ingenious man.

R U S T I C.

He'll think me too mean to employ his thoughts about.

S C A P E G O A T.

A man bent on dishonest deeds will descend to the meanest expedient that seems calculated to afford him success—But see to get dinner ready—let me see, 'tis Friday, I'll have some mutton broth heated, and a few eggs.

R U S T I C.

RUSTIC.

At what hour, Doctor?

SCAPEGOAT.

At one, to preserve my appetite — But see no visitors be admitted in, till dinner be removed.

Exit Scapegoat.

RUSTIC.

Mine is a hard place, God knows, we sha'n't be taxed for extravagance I'll swear, for the Doctor keeps a general fast all the year round. — I came to London, brim full of gay hopes, to feast on dainties, ducks and fowls, drink champaign and madeira, smoke my pipe and keep my girl, but I'm sadly mistaken, all love money, if six-pence is dropp'd, two stoops to pick it up; confusion to these delicate stomachs. — But here comes our organist, as I live,

Enter PURBLIND.

PURBLIND.

Tell the Doctor, I wait to see him, and mean to quit my office to those who will bend as dupes to men, who in the eye of the world pass for good, but I fear only to enrich their fortunes.

RUSTIC.

There you cannot blame, as all the world knows you

you are covetous, and cheated several more worthy than yourself, of this and other places.

PURBLIND.

Well, idiot, 'tis my business to speak with your master.

RUSTIC.

Then your business must wait, but here he comes.

Enter SCAPEGOAT.

SCAPEGOAT.

Well, Mr. Purblind, your commands, Sir?

PURBLIND.

To resign my place as organist.

SCAPEGOAT.

In that request you'll be indulged, but why this sudden change?

PURBLIND.

Too many masters to encounter with, one directs, another countermands, one approves, another disapproves; — the cause is obvious, your ambitious clerk, a most litigious advocate for money, would sacrifice justice to embrace it, lays claim to a singing master, yet ignorant of notes, a busy something, but no one knows what.

SCAPE-

The G O S P E L - S H O P.

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S C A P E G O A T.

I cannot credit it.

P U R B L I N D.

'Tis too true to need confirmation, the tongue of slander lies heavy on him, malice and revenge issue from his brain, and those private recesses of the mind, which should occupy principles of virtue, are with him employed in disgrace and infamy.

S C A P E G O A T.

I am griev'd to hear this of a man, who makes a sincere profession of Christianity.

P U R B L I N D.

Religion daily diminishes in the public esteem, so many hypocrites in one profession will soon disgrace the whole; I bid you adieu, Doctor, and thank you for past favors.

Exit Purblind.

S C A P E G O A T *solus.*

Various daggers seem directed at this man, some must be aim'd with justice, or I fear he'd not be suspicious of fresh discoveries.

Enter Rustic.

R U S T I C.

A lady of beauty and elegance requests admittance, Doctor,

H

S C A P E -

SCAPEGOAT.

An unseasonable hour—in my nightcap too—
however I have often been admired in it—let the
lady walk in.

Exit Rustic.

SCAPEGOAT *solus.*

Some curious female, I suppose, touched with
conviction, tired of life, or distressed in mind—
hardly to court—if she's handsome, I may admire,
rich may adore—but see she comes.

Enter ORINDA, smiling.

ORINDA.

The frankness of my visit, I hope, Doctor, you'll
excuse.

SCAPEGOAT.

The sweetness of her face delights my very soul.
(Aside.)

ORINDA.

This abrupt intrusion, dares your kindness to
forget?

SCAPEGOAT.

Those ravishing sounds disarm me of every
power. *(Aside.)*

ORINDA.

Deny not peace to the unworthy object that
asks it.

SCAPE-

S C A P E G O A T.

In her eyes are heavenly scenes of delight (*aside*)
Peace, my dear angel, all that thou cou'dst ask
would be too small for the pleasing sight of so
divine a fair.

O R I N D A.

You talk romantic, Doctor, and add a keenness
to my wound.

S C A P E G O A T.

Thy beauty will atone for trifling errors — let
not those deep fetch'd sighs eclipse the lustre of
those sparkling eyes.

O R I N D A.

Alas! Doctor, what can calm the foaming bil-
lows of my soul! what but a heavenly power vanish
those dreary prospects which infest my mind! —
the book of conscience will open her blackest cata-
logue of my aggravated crimes — to cheer my con-
science with transitory inventions, is at best but a
preludium of future eruptions — to yeild was —

S C A P E G O A T.

Kindness! an act of female pity —

O R I N D A.

A villain, whose impious name has blasted all
my hopes of future peace — my easy heart gave cre-
dit to his fond pretence, till I gave the busy instru-
ment of all my grief a full possession, —

SCAPEGOAT.

But why this silent agony of mind! the act was noble—but where's the villain fled?

ORINDA.

Beyond the seas——equipt with every article of value—he left me innocent of his intention—defitute and unprovided—his absence hath counted nine long months, since which, a fatal act—an act premeditated was complied with—love, the dear effusion of a grateful heart, o'erpowered my reason.

SCAPEGOAT.

Evade that unjust sorrow—'twas generous to give kind love a free access—to cull those sweets a villain sets no value on.

ORINDA.

My heart's dilated to every woe—each idle word and act proclaim their guilty horrors—but to love—be lov'd—and yet forbid the enjoyment! is distracting.

SCAPEGOAT.

You have consented.

ORINDA.

There rests all my grief; but how to enjoy without criminality, is a task of labour.—My husband lives, and he, for whom I bear this endless

less sorrow, is known in wedlock. How oft do I embrace the idol of my esteem, and yet condemn my own rashness! What a state of suspense, I wish for death, that he for whom life's precious might reign my sole delight!

SCAPEGOAT.

You wish your rival's exit come—that wish were rash; for then at her decease, he might reject your offers, knowing his enjoyment past, tho' more might be expected.

ORINDA.

Ah! what avails those soft condoling strains! in vain do flow'ry meads exalt their heads—my grief is fix'd; no shining suns illuminate my fears.—Timanthes! thee I adore, thou perfect portrait of heav'nly pleasantry!—his dear image is impress'd too deep, too near my heart to be eras'd.

SCAPEGOAT.

Orinda! thou dost wrong—to imbibe and cultivate a lawless passion, is an insult offer'd Heav'n.—Timanthes looses honor when he courts your smiles. Other females have suffer'd from his seeming fondness, but now are guarded from his 'luring acts.

ORINDA.

What would'st thou advise? no glitt'ring scenes dismiss my gloom; thro' all the labyrinths of nature have I search'd for civil solitude; cou'd I em-

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I embrace the goddess Peace again, I'd ne'er forsake her more.

*Sweet Peace, ah! whither, whither fled?
To what forlorn retreat?
Thy long-borne absence makes me dread,
This bosom ne'er you'll meet.*

S C A P E G O A T.

Wait the event of time; some new discoveries may arise, which shall yield thee pleasures, yet unknown—bid the blushing hopes of wanton dalliance adieu. Some friendly youth, like a new-blown rose, shall rear his head, to give the dear Orinda some unknown joy — that heart alone is worth accepting, whose sincere and ardent passion is centred in the bosom of one happy female.

O R I N D A.

Were that advantage mine, I shou'd be blest.

S C A P E G O A T.

'Tis but your due, wait heaven's decree, nor mourn shou'd it delay, for solid happiness is not on earth; they look too low, who look beneath the sky.

O R I N D A.

Wou'd Heav'n remove the harrowing torture in my breast, I wou'd repose my confidence there. Acts of parental disobedience summons again my fears, and death to the delinquent is my doom.

S C A P E -

SCAPEGOAT.

Compose your mind a little more—to share a man's affections with another is grievous—Heav'n ne'er admitted sorrow to depress, but found a remedy to exceed the wound.—I cou'd adore myself, but honor stifles that regard from acts of criminality—attend on the services of the chapel, and trust to the providence of heavenly wisdom, is the only method I can devise to obtain solid happiness.

ORINDA.

I am much benefited by your counsel, and will endeavour to check the fruitless passion operating towards a confin'd object.

SCAPEGOAT.

Heav'n is liberal, and will grant your wants—let duty extort the grateful pray'r, in which each secret wish shall return approv'd—so providence with parent care provides sure comfort for her faithful guests!

ORINDA.

Accept my thanks—to thee this great relief I owe.—Heaven reward the act—far hence, ye busy scenes of gay delight—no more shall tempting infidels approach me.—Come emulation, rise! improve my hours,

And take each growing evil from my heart,
Whose full design is now to act a nobler part.

Exeunt omnes.

S C E N E II.

S C E N E *a Hall.**Enter R U S T I C.*

R U S T I C.

Faith, this Mordecai is behind his time; perhaps he has carried his new coined beauties somewhere else, and forgot how cheap he had the last bargain; but hark! the rascal comes.

Enter M O R D E C A I.

R U S T I C.

Ah! Mordecai, I had almost giv'n you over, 'tis past eight.—

M O R D E C A I.

Travellers, in pursuing business, cannot account for delay — 'tis well they arrive in safety, the roads are so infested now.

R U S T I C.

Infested with what?

M O R D E C A I.

Highwaymen.

R U S T I C.

Aye, I've heard that's a good business.

M O R -

The GOSPEL-SHOP.

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MORDECAI.

And a very hazardous one, it lies too near the halter.

RUSTIC.

But if I cou'd gallop to Finchly, and bring back but twenty pounds, the first adventure, I would then resign the employ.

MORDECAI.

But what if you are catch'd the first time.

RUSTIC.

Bribe justice, and escape the gallows—but I've changed my mind, as detection is unavoidable—where's your new coined beauties?

MORDECAI.

Here's the pretty charmers (*showing them*)

RUSTIC.

Faith, so they are—one of them will purchase Molly's commodity, I'll swear.—Here's the plate which went a begging, but tired its benefactors—a corkscrew, that never drew a cork and a bag of bad silver that nobody cares to own.—

MORDECAI.

What's the whole value?

I

RUSTIC.

RUSTIC.

Twelve of the same sort, nothing less will do.

MORDECAI.

I'll give you ten, to gain your future favors.

RUSTIC.

Well, count them in.

MORDECAI.

I hope you'll remember me again.

RUSTIC.

Yes, yes, I dare swear, I shall remember you long enough — they're all good, Mordecai, I hope.

MORDECAI.

All sterling value.

Exit Mordecai.

RUSTIC *solus.*

Now I must employ my cunning; to keep my master ignorant, if he suspects me, I'll swear it on old Mary; she carries suspicion in her looks, and having a bad name, the defraud will pass off well; she has committed many bad actions, and who knows but a false accusation may be of service to her — this is the world —

*They fix their faults on one of impious name,
And though they're innocent, still bear the blame.*

End of Act the Third.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

SCENE a Parlour.

Enter CLARISSA singing, SILVA listening without.

Adieu! ye lovely pleasing scenes,
That once my fancy drew,
And painted joy in all my dreams,
Timanthes then in view.

He now for me no kindness shews,
Orinda shares his heart;
Tho' once to me he prest so close,
I ne'er then thought he'd part.

SILVA.

O Heavens! I'm enraptur'd with her enchanting voice.—(*Aside.*)

CLARISSA.

Well, I see there's no confidence in man; I'll fret no more—if he loves another, why wish him back? yet, he was lovely, kind, and so sweetly he kiss'd me, after service, in the green pew, I wished to have dwelt with him there for ever— foolish girl, to repeat past enjoyments, which may ne'er return—I'm not ugly, I don't despair—I'll put on my cherry jacket, and make a new conquest— But that impertinent, Silva, is ever tormenting me,

SILVA.

The wanton loves me (*aside*)

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CLA-

CLARISSA.

Wou'd see me home last night, then must kiss
me—why—because it's the fashion — all lips are
alike to him, they yield the same sweetness.——
But here's the stripling, as I live. —

Enter SILVA.

SILVA.

O for words to tell the happiness of my mind—
I have been list'ning with rapture to your divine
melody—O Clarissa, what happy object have you
been dwelling on with those bewitching sounds —
had I been included in your song, the world were
too small to hold the exulting transport of my soul.
Can I prevail on you for another strain.

CLARISSA sings.

*The pleasing pastime now is o'er,
The moments fled away;
Timanthes now will love no more,
No more employ the day.*

*I eager wish'd to snatch the prize,
But he defer'd the day;
Yet look'd so honest, in his eyes,
He banish'd doubt away.*

SILVA.

How delightful her voice, yet how distressing —
she charms me with sounds; but wounds me with
words (*aside.*) Why grieve after Timanthes,
a general

a general lover, faithless and insincere, the wanton fallies of a sudden passion? what regard can he boast of, who moves his affections at command from chapel to church, or church to play.

C L A R I S S A.

There's some reason in this (*aside*)

S I L V A.

Why sullen those endearing eyes, and cause a feeble paleness on those blooming cheeks, for one that scarce deserves a name? Impatient all the wearied night, I waited, with reluctance the morning light, to review my adorable Clarissa; once more I feast my eyes on that precious object, which grieves me to admire.

C L A R I S S A.

Forbear to love, when grief is mix'd with hope; change but the prospect, and you save distress; that conquest you desire can ne'er be yours.

S I L V A.

Those words add rancour to my wound; do but smile, and e'en despair shall please.

C L A R I S S A.

The bee may gather sweets from thorns, but love cannot be extracted from envy; to wish for my regard is what I cannot grant.

S I L V A.

Leave but a gleam of hope, and I'm happy; to be

be lock'd in those encircling arms, and taste the blissful kiss, would be too great a joy; to anticipate the thought alone, is heavenly pleasure.

CLARISSA.

I hear you've been a busy courtier at all public meetings.

SILVIA.

Those were the frolicks of my juvenile days — fashionable exploits — I have courted many at the Tabernacle, and always made my conquest sure.

CLARISSA.

Greatness of mind is always compassionate; but deceit is the effect of weakness.

SILVIA.

No, they thought us sincere; but when we found them of light property, or little fortune, we acquitted ourselves honorably, by pretending it all a frolick — so it past current.

CLARISSA.

Then, if the object you address was of large estate, I presume you would have been in earnest.

SILVIA.

No! no! something besides fortune is required.

CLARISSA.

Only her consent. — Well, such base counterfeits
I despise —

I despise—conceit degrades a man, and deceit taints
a virtuous mind, too many wear sanctified faces;
only to deceive the world.

S I L V A .

You mislead your judgment, Clarissa; the wealth
of Indies, without sense and beauty, wou'd ne'er
in me excite one spark of love.

C L A R I S S A .

Then how came conquests so easy, when only
humour enforced the passion?

S I L V A .

I'll tell you—I praised their persons—sung their
hymns—kiss'd their cheeks—swore I lov'd—call'd
them angels—prest their hands—looked grave—
talk'd serious—sighed and courted—and soon
prevail'd.

C L A R I S S A .

But what hypocrisy you assumed!

S I L V A .

No! no! our skill in that business carried off the
disguise; where no beauty attracts, there's no dan-
ger of a snare.

C L A R I S S A .

Passion blinds their reason, they value the privi-
lege of being conducted home by a flashy coxcomb;
but many bad things are done by custom.

S I L V A .

SILVA.

Religion destroys their faculties; there's no merit
in a Tabernacle conquest, they are so easily gained.

CLARISSA.

There is an odious spirit in some men, who had
rather detect a fault than commend a virtue; the
ornaments of the mind are wisdom and gratitude;
but the deformed opinion of the world, now, is
wantonness and beauty; give me a generous hand,
a faithful heart, and the world may take the rest;
tho' vain the wish.

SILVA.

Why shou'd a cloud of woe eclipse the living
beauties of thy mind, and snatch the blooming hew
from off those lovely cheeks, where meek resigna-
tion sits in pensive attitude?

CLARISSA.

I griev'd for man, but now by every solemn pow'r,
protest to leave the world, and all its various
frauds, to faithless man's employ; to thoughts sub-
lime I'll bend my mind, and live a life of perfect
solitude, whose peaceful scenes breathe calm con-
tent, and charm away my cares.

SING S.

*Joy, thou imperious passion of the soul,
At whose command extatic pleasures rise,
And glowing transports o'er the bosom roll,
To captivate, enliven, and surprise.*

'Tis

'Tis thine to cheer the solitary gloom,
To sooth our griefs, and dissipate each care;
To make the barren wilderness to bloom,
And cheer each heart oppress'd with sad despair.

Now dart thy cheering rays thro' ev'ry mind,
Bid truth and harmony for ever live;
Let men be gen'rous, then the fair'll be kind,
And thou to each a lasting pleasure give.

Exit Clarissa.

S I L V A.

How disorder'd is her mind! love is a poison-
ous quality, it preys on her spirits, and wounds her
peace; I'll see to pacify her, and quell the rising
tumults of her breast.—

*Wou'd she but one smile impart,
I'd give her all, I'd give my heart.*

Exit Silva.

K

SCENE

S C E N E II.

S C E N E *a Vestry.*

Enter Doctor SCAPEGOAT, LOVEFEAST,
and CARELESS.

CARELESS.

We attend you, Doctor, at your former request.

SCAPEGOAT.

The business I wou'd notice is trifling; but order and punctuality must be observed. — Several presents have been sent me from some worthy friends to compleat the chapel; as these are gifts designed to benefit an individual, a distribution would defeat the intention of the donor.

LOVEFEAST.

As we all are partners in this business, it should become a joint property.

SCAPEGOAT.

Part of which being communion plate and a legacy, you cannot expect to share it.

LOVEFEAST.

In gratitude to the deceased, I must claim a quarter value.

CARELESS.

Pride is a baneful principle—I'm sorry, Doctor,
to

THE GOSPEL-SHOP.

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to see you dispute the property of so frivolous an article, you grasp at the bait of fortune, with such violent impetuosity, you loose the enjoyment of your own wealth.

SCAPEGOAT.

They are friendly tokens of Christian love, and therefore hope you'll relinquish your claim.

CARELESS.

'Tis scarce worth the debate, the Doctor is welcome to mine.

LOVEFEAST.

And I believe I may say to mine.

SCAPEGOAT.

I acknowledge this kind decision, and my hand you may command at any time.

LOVEFEAST.

Not, if to fetch a guinea from your pocket (*aside*)
We spent an hour at the Crown, last night, Doctor,
you'd have been well entertained; we had several
humorous songs, and drank part of six bottles.

SCAPEGOAT.

The tavern is but a dull road to classical
knowledge—those embittered pleasures you pur-
sue will soon be o'er—wou'd you relish your gay
scenes, or busy exploits, when sickness has forbid
you the use of them?

L O V E F E A S T.

The bare anticipation of past enjoyments afford a pleasing reflection; but you, Doctor, are unfit for society, beyond those whose serious melancholy invites your presence.

S C A P E G O A T.

From giddy folly I steal my hours, and dedicate them to study; there is a certain sweetness in solitude, which, to a serene mind, far exceeds the pleasures of company.

C A R E L E S S.

You have estates, Doctor, and wrong affliction, by delaying to give relief; poverty frowns at your wealth, and even keen distress seems unwilling to share it; its use is lost, as your intention to employ it is to no generous purpose.—When death arrives, then the ambitious man bequeaths that which in life he grieves to part with—like the miserly mind, would sink his soul to hell, by carrying his riches to the grave with his body.

*Happy are they whose acts will screen
And shield the dread of life's last scene.*

S C A P E G O A T.

I wonder at this dispute—my hand is ever ready to alleviate distress—let each look to his own acts, and learn to mend his faults by others.

Exeunt omnes.

End of the Fourth Act.

ACT

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A C T V.

S C E N E I.

S C E N E a Garden.

Enter SILVA.

SILVA.

These are the shades which enjoy Clarissa's smiles, they warn her of the world and faithless man; here she retires for serene solitude, happy arbor of love; 'tis near her time of coming; ye heavenly powers, assist me to redeem the fair from each shadow of distress—how sweet the converse of innocence!—wanton smiles seduce mankind—more happy he who receives one cheering smile from the dear Clarissa than all the luxuries of a harlot's embraces.—But hark! her footsteps charm the barren ground—see, she comes with heavenly dignity!

Enter CLARISSA musing.

Each scene of gay delight is gone—no hopes accelerate my steps—gloomy despair obstructs my way—ye pitying angels, why delay? relief give some youth a grateful heart, and give Clarissa peace—passion rides triumphant o'er my soul—help me to compleat revenge, by sending one more faithful, more endearing than Timanthes.

SILVA.

Behold his rival, one more faithful and one attach'd to no deceit, free from the snare of general love, and happy in admiring one alone!

CLARISSA.

How camest thou acquainted with my being here?

SILVA.

The information I received came from above e'er since I last beheld your glorious face, I courted

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heaven to make me yours; and by a fervent zealous prayer have received a happy assurance of success.

CLARISSA.

Canst thou live on one alone? temptations are strong, youth vigorous; other objects may attract the same emotion, the same regard; these are weighty subjects, and should be well digested, e'er we commit an act of uncertainty, a life of happiness, or a life of misery.

SILVA.

My mind has ponder'd on these subjects long, and well I know, no other can erase the deep impression of your person; when beauty fades, your sense and virtue will more splendid shine, and please even to time's last dawn—accept my hand, Clarissa, and my life shall be acceptable only for your welfare; each act shall be exercis'd to give you joy, and cause an acknowledgment of your happy change.

CLARISSA.

There seems a generous mildness in your words, which governs sincerity; sympathy and compassion induce me to credit your regard, which, if confirmed by acts of nobleness and merit, believe, Clarissa, will be ever yours.

SILVA.

Then witness every power divine, by this kiss, that Silva, once a slave to every blooming girl, is now the happy captive to Clarissa's charms for ever.

CLARISSA.

And Clarissa, with all the fervor of a woman's zeal, will revere the name of Silva.

*Tell to the world in ever living songs,
Whut heav'nly bliss to gen'rous love belongs;
Merits like these are of the angelic kind,
They please the objects, and they charm mankind.*

Exeunt Omnes.

SCENE II.

SCENE a Hall.

Enter Doctor SCAPEGOAT, RUSTIC,
and Old MARY.

SCAPEGOAT.

Well, Mary, what's brought you hither?

MARY.

Necessity, good Doctor; it drives me many a
weary mile to seek a penny in an honest way.

RUSTIC.

Aye, and to steal a guinea; our corkscrew and
other articles of value have been missing some time.

SCAPEGOAT.

How's this, Mary? if poverty is your trouble,
you shou'd avoid punishable acts; when relief is ge-
nerously extended, some liberty is always taken;
but such acts will forfeit my future favors.

MARY.

You'll relieve me now, Doctor, I have had no
nourishment to-day.

SCAPEGOAT.

Away, thou blasphemous infidel — how off is the
hand

hand of liberality abused! the world abounds with such beggars, who by their disastrous tales poison the charity of every benefactor.

Exit Scapegoat.

R U S T I C.

Away with you, you old baggage.

M A R Y.

You vile betrayer of my innocence.

R U S T I C.

Betray your innocence! yes, betray your roguery, you old fornicating limb of the devil.

M A R Y.

You ugly pretender to godliness, I shall see you an outcast on dunghills and desarts.

R U S T I C.

Not for being a thief, you old lascivious wretch! look at your yawning grave, and prepare for that; I'll make you as conspicuous as the pulpit, that your friends may avoid your acts of imposition, you vile hypocrite.

M A R Y.

You're all sanctified villains, the greatest accuses the least; but I'll prepare a remedy to cure your slanderous tongue, I'll warrant you, you sneaking shuffler.

Exit Old Mary.

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RUSTIC.

Ha! ha! ha! how I've worried the poor cripple, but she deserves it, well I don't fear Mordecai now, I shall retain my place with honor, old Mary carries off the fraud—but here is Simon, as I live, his looks portend something fatal.

Enter SIMON.

RUSTIC.

Master Simon, I'm glad to see you, did you meet that old perjured original, an old bantling, she asked my master charity to day, and stole his corkscrew, just before.

SIMON.

I never had a favorable opinion of her honesty.

RUSTIC.

No, nor I, but her fawning, flattering tongue, coax'd me to draw a pint of small beer; in my absence, she secreted these things.

SIMON.

—She must not be admitted; she brings disgrace on the chapel.

RUSTIC.

She does so, and there are many others, on the list, who carry a cloke of sanctity about them, and are no better, but you and I, Simon, stand all
L malice—

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malice—What do you think, I am going to court a woman of property and fashion to day.

S I M O N.

You amaze me! who?

R U S T I C.

No less a person than the widow Goodenough.

S I M O N.

And can you assume that assurance to a woman of fortune?

R U S T I C.

Can I! deceit has more courage than meek honesty—why 'twas but last monday fortnight, our milk-man married a girl, with a fortune of twenty-five pounds fourteen shillings, besides wearing-apparel, a cradle and two handsome chamber pots, and she was an excellent bed-fellow, I know.

S I M O N.

You know!

R U S T I C.

Aye, she used to call me her sweet enamorado—but I must haste to meet my dear angelic bewitching.

S I M O N.

Who?

Rustic.

RUSTIC.

My adorable.

SIMON.

Why, the fellow's mad, where learnt you that profuse extravagance?

RUSTIC.

At the University to be sure - but I'll tell you, Simon, I found a curious letter of Lovefeast's, to one of his girls, so have copied it, and sent it to my lady, and she flatters me so far as to say it's clever, you'll be secret, Simon, and I'll read it.

SIMON.

That you may depend on,

Supercribed to Miss Betsy Loveit.

Angelic Fair,

Though unknown to your divine image, I have ever beheld your beauteous portrait before me, the pow'rs of which surmount every effort to conceal my passion, I am young and active, fired with love, ardor and emotion; for you I bear the strongest tokens of mutual affection; could I but paint the distress of my mind, in being a moment absent from you, you would forgive this freedom, I cannot approach your presence for fear of an impulse, give me but permission, and our hearts shall be united in love for ever.

L 2

RUSTIC.

RUSTIC.

What think you of this epistle, Simon?

SIMON.

An heroic one, but Rustic, your sense is so inferior to that, you'll disappoint the lady, and deceive yourself.

RUSTIC.

No, no, no, trust me for that, I've bought a collection of words for the purpose.

SIMON.

Of addressing an owl dressed in peacocks feathers, prodigious bewitching indeed.

RUSTIC.

Graceful, lovely and—

SIMON.

Ugly, frightful and—

RUSTIC.

The purse! the purse! you forget that.

SIMON.

Aye true, I had forgot the principle charm, why I think the devil's in our town now, nothing but weddings,

weddings, elopements, divorces and bankrupts, all confusion now, trade destroyed, credit locked, up in a nunery, yet generosity still shines forth, as England's darling prerogative — and what tempts a highwayman to Finchley, tempts the lawyer, doctor and divine to do justice.

R U S T I C.

What's that, Simon?

S I M O N.

The purse! the purse! — I'm wond'ring what pretensions you can have to a wife, a raw, unfledg'd diminutive animal, without air, shape, or figure.

R U S T I C.

Never was a tighter little fellow made, here's a set of features that would grace a peer — was you to see me in my Sunday cloaths you'd say the same; I have as neat a pair of four thread cotton, as ever grac'd a gentleman's leg, a hat of Comyn's cock, and my new suit of crimson, turned up with black makes me as handsome a fellow as ever came from Devonshire the only fault is Snip's pressing demands, but I put him off, till my wedding, so he's satisfied.

S I M O N.

An easy way of putting off demands, but if you fail, how then?

R U S T I C.

How then! why that's impossible, then sue her for damages, but I shall swear I love her as never wo-

man

man was loved before, and so play the cheat 'till
I've gained her.

S I M O N.

That's true deceit, Rustic.

R U S T I C.

Employ'd to a good purpose; you must not touch
on that head, as you have employed it for baser
purposes, mine is an act of gallantry, and will
maintain it with a spirit, till I succeed; or if I fail—
then tis only the trouble of courting another—but
I must haste to discharge my volume of eloquence
to gain her affections.

*If I succeed I'll give thee gold a purse,
But if I fail, I know you'll give a curse;
My heart is liberal, tho' my purse is low,
But where 'tis full, they little good bestow.*

S I M O N.

Now thou art noble, and I wish thee success.

Exeunt omnes.

SCENE A Vestry-Room.

Enter Dr. SCAPEGOAT, PROLIX,
LOVEFEAST and CARELESS.

S C A P E G O A T.

Since Lovefeast has coincided with our agree-
ment, we'll retain him still a partner, and now be-
ing all assembled, hope each proprietor will avoid
the eye of criticism, detecting a fault; the world are
busy with our actions, and we must be aware of
their censures.

PROLIX.

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PROLIX.

Let conscious virtue guide our actions, and the curious employ of our enemies will cease—Love-feast must regularly attend his duty, and all must labor to deserve the countenance of our present benefactors.

LOVEFEAST.

The frolicks of women I shall lay aside, and devote my time to industry, interest and religion.

CARELESS.

*Then let the world our private actions watch,
If all be upright, there's no fault to catch,
Secure in innocence, defy their snare,
And live without the jealousy of fear.*

Exeunt omnes.



FINIS.

EPILOGUE,

Intended to have been Spoken.

HERE I am come—just 'scap'd from all the rout,
Through thick and thin, to find this author out;
All is in uproar—broiling out their brains,
With damn him—starve him—hang him up in chains.
Above—below—without—within—around—
Confus'd, embitter'd, Methodists are found.
Shou'd he be caught, sad woe attends his fate,
For hymns and Pray'rs are levell'd at his pate,
Oh lud! says one, how ill our parson's used,
Turn'd inside out, and terribly abus'd!
A pretty author truly—in his fare,
To send a parson, to be made a player!
I'll stab the incestuous villain to the heart
'Ere he again shall act so vile a part.
Another says—we'll fix him on our scone and learn him
That true repentance—is before all learning!
We'll light our smiling tapers then and—burn him. }

Poor soul! he's not without a clause to cheer him—
His shield is justice—that alone will clear him—
'Tis true! he tore the tinsell off—gave crimes their due,
Mark'd cut the monster—and hung him up to view,
Too well 'tis known—the preacher loves his purse,
And fears it gone; tho' keeping it's a curse.
And tho' secur'd by a religious fence,
Are void of honor, gratitude, and sense.
Shall keen-ey'd lucre give to fame its birth,
To those who vainly seek its joys on earth!
While parsons loiter near the pulpit stairs,
To pick up pence, for penitence and prayers!
Are these the objects then of public fame?—
Do they deserve the prize of nobler name?—
Not they—Then shun, oh! shun that wretched fate,
And all the whining tribe of flatterers hate.
Ah! what avails that they can poorly boast
A rev'rend title—when their honor's lost?
Happy's the man that can with pleasure boast
Truth for his motto!—And justice for his toast.

EPITAPH

Intended to have been Spoken.

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Through thick and thin, to find this author out;
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